

sheet supply tray, the documents sheet outlet tray and the multi-purpose tray being confined within the width of the image recording device.

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. The applicants respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Response is fully responsive to the Office Action dated January 21, 2000.

As to the Merits:

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner sets forth the following rejections:

(1) claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Kojima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,412,490) in view of Ono (U.S. Patent No. 5,796,496); and

(2) claims 4, 5, 9, 10 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Kojima in view of Ono and in further view of Sakaue (European Patent Publication No. 0 673 147 A2).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Although, the Examiner admits that the primary reference of Kojima "does not clearly disclose a multi-purpose tray below the document sheet outlet tray, and a recording sheet supply part located below the multi-purpose tray for holding stacked recording sheets which are supplied one at a time, the recording sheet supply part including a paper cassette which is attachable and detachable from the image recording device,"¹ the Examiner relies on the secondary reference of Ono for teaching such deficiencies or drawbacks of Kojima.

More specifically, the Examiner asserts that Ono discloses:

a recording sheet supply part (paper cassettes 98, 100, and 102, figure 1) ... therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kojima wherein a recording paper supply part which is attachable to and detachable from the image recording device would have been installed below a multi-purpose tray.²

However, the paper tray 94 of Ono is formed on the paper cassette 92. Therefore, if the paper cassette 92 is removed, the paper tray 94 does not function. In the present invention, on the contrary, the multi-purpose tray is independent of the paper cassette; the multi-purpose tray is part of the apparatus main body. Therefore, even if the paper cassette is removed, a user can load a recording sheet onto the multi-purpose tray.

¹ Please see, lines 6 - 10, page 3 of the outstanding Action.

² Please see, lines 1 - 6, page 4 of the outstanding Action.

Thus, even if, arguendo, the teachings of Kojima and Ono can be combined in the manner suggested by the Examiner, such combined teachings would still fall far short in fully meeting the applicants' claimed invention. As such, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have found the applicants' claimed invention obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Kojima or Ono, singly or in combination.

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that the prior art fails to teach or suggest recitations of claims 1 - 13 and requested that the Examiner allow these claims, along with the entire application, to issue. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1- 13, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully solicited.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL
May 18, 2000

U.S. Appln. No. 08/942,415

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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